AI Without Bosses

Orientation

A 15-Week Curriculum on Democratic Alternatives to Big Tech AI

Platform Cooperativism Consortium at The New School

Platform Cooperativism Consortium

AI WITHOUT BOSSES

August 27 – December 10, 2026

Thursdays
12:10 pm ET (NYC time) to 2:00 pm ET

one exception: week 3
class meets on Friday at 9 am ET

This course analyzes Big Tech AI, explores democratic alternatives, and shows how communities can resist extractive models.

Logic of the Syllabus

1 **Part I: Understanding the Problem**

Foundations; Unpacking the Myths of AI; Colonialism Reloaded; The Environmental Cost of AI; AI and the Appropriation of Creative Labor; Automation's Backbone

2 **Part II: Political Responses**

Regulate, Enforce, Build Worker Power; Digital Independence

3 **Part III: Building Alternatives**

From Refusal to Cooperative AI and the Solidarity Stack; Applying Cooperative Principles to AI Ethics; What Coops Are Already Doing

4 **Part IV: Movement Building**

Movement Building; What Stays With Us: Closing Circle and Collective Commitments

Fall 2025:
180 Students

working in

33 countries on
6 continents in
29 fields

Platform Cooperativism Consortium

Syllabus Structure

1. Title and course information
2. Course description
3. Course learning objectives
4. Remote learning guidelines
5. Policy on generative AI
6. Certification requirements
7. Course participants
8. Three distinct syllabi
9. Readings
10. Pedagogy
11. Community norms
12. Course flow
13. Schedule notes
14. Course outline

Course Policies

Summary of essential course policies and administrative information

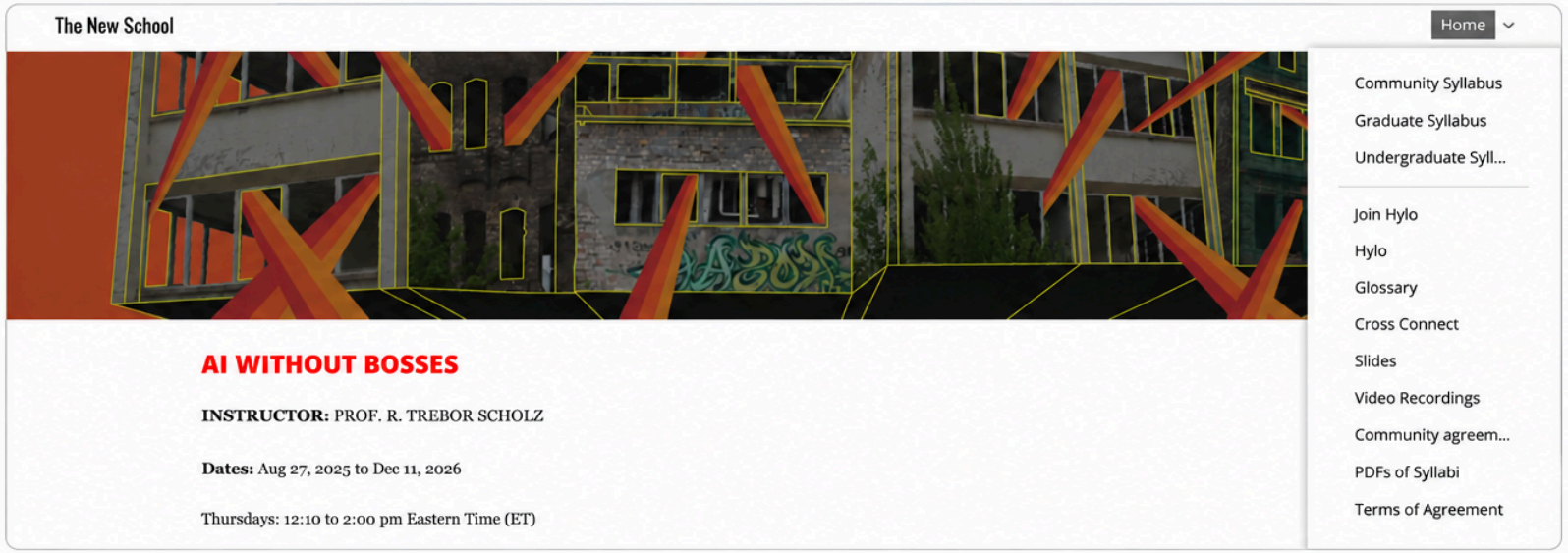
1. **Participation and certification**
   Details regarding course attendance requirements and final completion verification.

2. **Required materials and expenses**
   Listing of necessary textbooks, software, and anticipated course-related costs.

3. **Academic integrity policy**
   Guidelines on honest academic conduct and consequences for plagiarism or cheating.

4. **Title IX policy**
   Information regarding gender-based discrimination and harassment reporting processes.

THERE ARE 3 ROUTES IN THIS COURSE



CHOOSE YOUR ROUTE

1 MATRICULATED
(New School Students)
For degree-seeking students.

GRADUATE
If you are a graduate student, follow this option.
Go to:
Graduate Syllabus

UNDERGRADUATE
If you are an undergraduate student, follow this option.
Go to:
Undergraduate Syllabus

2 COMMUNITY
(Not Matriculated)
For community members (not matriculated students).
Go to:
Community Syllabus

3 ASYNCHRONOUS
(Incompatible Time Zones)
For participants in incompatible time zones who cannot attend live.
Go to:
Hylo

ASYNCHRONOUS MEANS:

For this course, participants:

- **READ** the texts
- **WATCH** the recordings of each class
- **ATTEND** office hours once each month

COMMUNITY SECTION PARTICIPANTS

Community section participants have no written or oral assignments.

To receive your course certificate,

you must attend 12 out of the 15 course sessions.

OUR COURSE PEDAGOGY

This course is very participatory,
with a strong focus on
team building among participants.

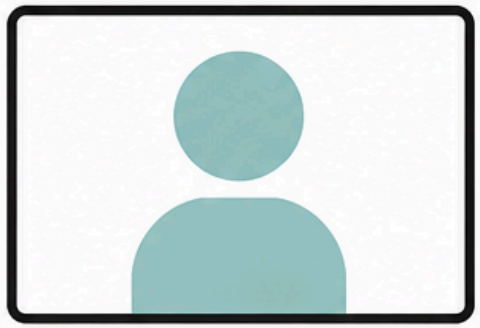
TO ENSURE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION,

WE ASK ALL PARTICIPANTS TO:

BE ON A
LAPTOP OR DESKTOP
(NOT A MOBILE PHONE)

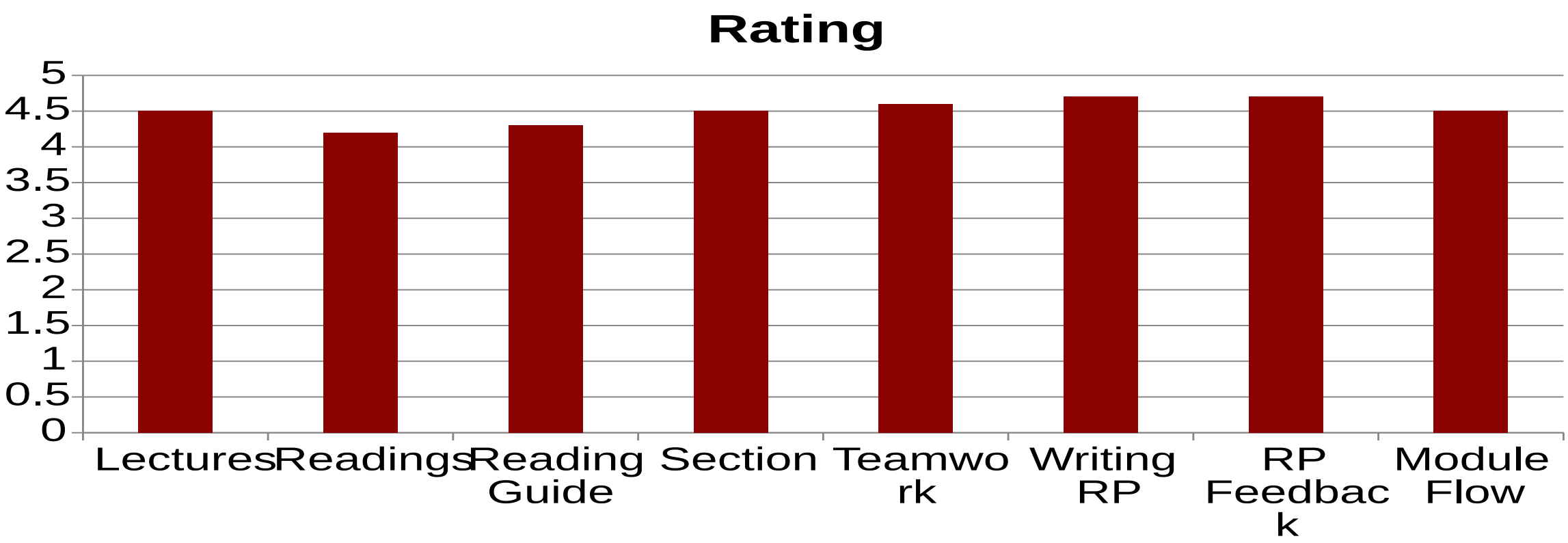
AND

ALWAYS HAVE
THE CAMERA ON



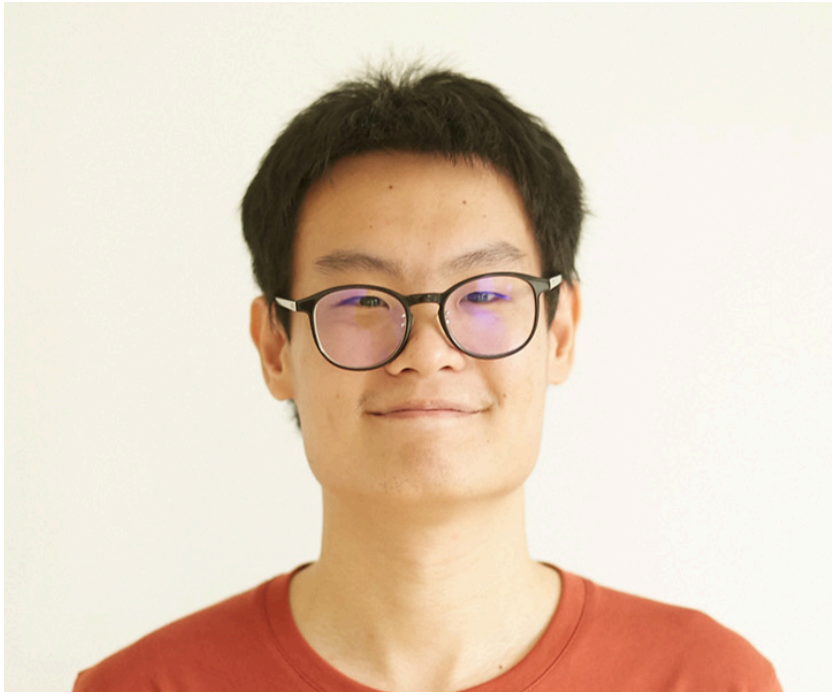
OVERALL COURSE

Using the scale below, please rate how often you think each statement has been true so far in this course (1=Never to 5=Always).

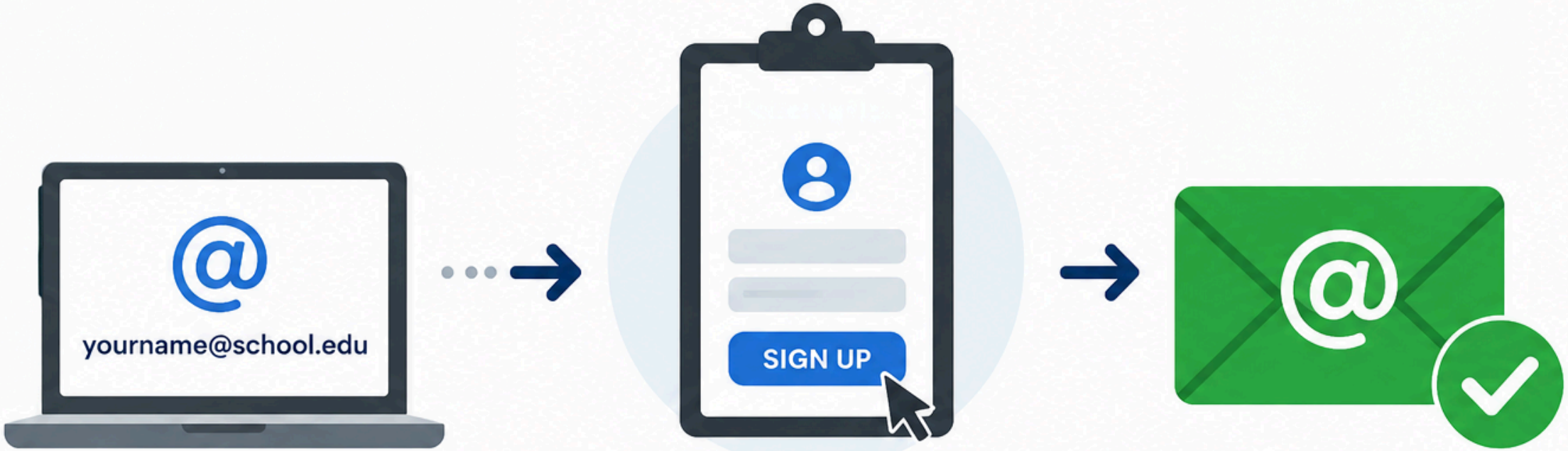


STRUCTURE OF EACH CLASS

11:50 AM ET (NYC TIME)	**SHOW UP** Warm up led by a participant
12:00 PM ET TO 12:15 PM ET	**LECTURE** Trebor Scholz
12:15 PM ET TO 1:15 PM ET	**PARTICIPATORY CLASS ACTIVITIES**
1:15 PM ET TO 1:50 PM ET	**GUEST SPEAKER**
1:50 PM ET TO 2:00 PM ET	**TAKEAWAYS, PLUSES, DELTAS** Reflection and closing



canvas



You will receive messages in your new school account

Until you sign up to use your own email

After signing up, messages will be sent to your own email

HYLO

COST:

$45 REGISTRATION FEE FOR ALL

+ FOR GLOBAL NORTH: $60 COURSE FEE

WE WILL **EMAIL** A **LINK TO ENROLL.**
ONCE RECEIVED, YOU **MUST ENROLL RIGHT AWAY.**

Google Docs

WE WILL USE GOOGLE DOCS FOR WRITING

Each matriculated student has their own folder where they keep all their assignments.

Each student has their own folder

My Drive > AI Without Bosses > Student Folders

Folders

Student_01	Assignment 1	Assignment 2
Student_02	Assignment 1	Assignment 2
Student_03	Assignment 1	Assignment 2

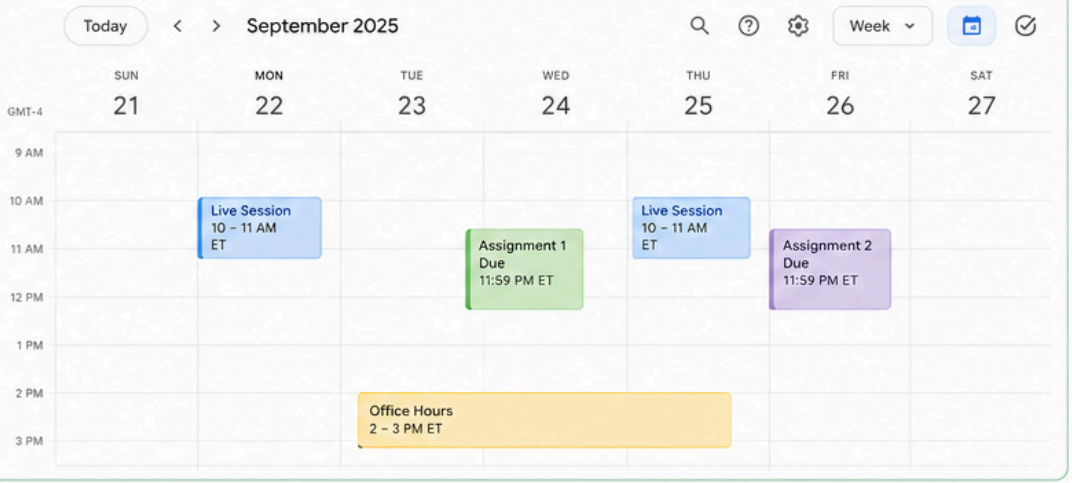
Keep all your work in your folder so it's organized and easy to find.

Google Calendar

WITH ALL PARTICIPANTS, WE WILL USE GOOGLE CALENDAR

We will use Google Calendar to keep track of important dates, deadlines, and live session times across all time zones.

All important dates in one place



These tools help us stay organized, collaborate effectively, and keep everyone on the same page.

Analyze, Imagine, Mobilize

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